CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF THE VENEZUELAN SUPPLY OFFICER

Silvio Arraiz E.

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THESIS

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VENEZUELAN SUPPLY OFFICER

by

Silvio Arraiz E.

June 1977

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The purpose of this thesis is to develop a rational career model for the Venezuelan supply officer. An exposition is made of how the present supply officer progresses in his naval career. The current development practices are analyzed, and the areas in which they need improvement are examined.

The nature and characteristics of the supply officer are defined in several ways to provide a better understanding of

his role and responsibilities within the Venezuelan Navy.

Finally, a career model for the Venezuelan supply officer is proposed.

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Career Development of the Venezuelan Supply Officer

by

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Lieutenant-Commander, Venezuelan Navy
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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I. INTRODUCTION

The present study is intended to serve as a basis for discussion of the career development of the supply officer in the Venezuelan Navy.

In the past decade there has been an increasing emphasis on career development for Naval Corps officers, evidenced by widespread interest among officers in all branches of the naval environment. This emphasis has been strengthened by the recent account prepared by the Chief of Logistics for the Commandant of the Venezuelan Navy, wherein are summarized several factors affecting Supply Corps officers, such as a lack of enough senior and junior supply officers to meet the requirements of the organization; a lack of educated and trained supply officers capable of coping with the higher managerial demands efficiently; a lack of incentive to attract officers to the supply specialty because of uncertain career paths; and a lack of a manual for the Naval Career.

Career development, understood in its fullest extent, includes the full range of vocational selection, recruiting, development and appraisal. This study will not discuss the psychology of making a career selection since it is presumed that all naval officers involved in the development process, for whatever reasons, have already decided to make a career in the Navy. Similarly, the subjects of recruiting and appraisal will be treated only in passing as they apply to career development.

This study will limit itself to three areas of career development: functional training, education and development.

Education is a continuing way of life, and, within the military services, it contributes much to the intellectual development of officers. The education and training of modern naval officers are, today, a career-long process. This fact is highlighted by an environment within which education and training form a major mission of the Navy [1, 161].

Chapter II of the present study is a definition of the problem and needs.

Chapter III is a description of the current development practices being used by the Venezuelan Navy.

Chapter IV describes the roles and characteristics demanded from the supply officers. Emphasis is placed on the operational and administrative aspects necessary to successfully manage the logistics system.

Chapter V proposes a model of career development for supply officers in the Venezuelan Navy.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Venezuelan Naval Corps officers are organized into specialties to meet the needs and requirements of the total organization.

This organization recognizes that knowledge and skill in a particular specialty area can be developed only in the particular blends, breadth and depth required by the Navy. The system is dependent upon the existence of separate promotion categories which permit officers with comparable skills and types of experience to compete against each other, thus guaranteeing equitable advancement opportunities for all.

The Supply Corps is the Venezuelan Navy's corps responsible for the supply phases of naval logistics.

The broad responsibilities of the Supply Corps officers are closely related to those of many executive and managerial positions in private industry, and embrace such areas as financial management; inventory control; purchasing; merchandising; transportation and personal services, including paying and feeding the naval forces; and operating the Navy's exchanges.

In the course of his naval progression, an individual supply officer may be ordered to a great variety of duty assignments, commonly known as billets. Billets exist for supply officers on the majority of Venezuelan naval vessels and at Naval Supply Centers, command and other shore stations.

The newly-commissioned supply officer selects his preferred specialty in his last term as midshipman at the Venezuelan Naval Academy. Most of the midshipmen choose surface warfare (engineering, weapons, and operations); only a very limited number apply for supply. This trend is originated by the following factors:

1. So far as its mission is concerned, the curriculum structure of the Naval Academy is totally oriented to qualify midshipmen as surface warfare specialists, with very little concern given to the supply area.

2. Career paths in the supply specialty are uncertain.

3. Motivation toward the supply specialty is unpopular.

4. There is not a manual for the officer's career which designs a flexible and general pattern of potential assignment, tour lengths, training, and education.

Of course, the low number of applicants has caused a shortage of supply officers to fulfill existing billets. To attack this deficiency, the Navy has followed a pattern of designating officers from other specialties to meet the demands. Occasionally, a billet has been left vacant when there is another supply officer working in the same activity.

All this has been aggravated by the purchase of modern units, creation of new services, and the construction of new facilities that have increased the number of existing billets.

Traditionally, the billets have been filled with officers who will gain their managerial skill through experience (i.e., on-the-job training and job rotation) in various functions of the organization and at different levels of responsibilities.

The expansion and modernization of the Navy, however, have imposed higher managerial demands on supply officers. Some of the new demands, such as human behavior, analytical and quantitative problem-solving abilities, and financial accounting can be obtained only through formal training.

Although the Navy has met the requirement in the past, training its personnel with both on-the-job training and job rotation methods, the organization is now requiring supply officers educated in a variety of management disciplines, in both a practical and theoretical sense. The level of expertise required has increased and with it the identification of functional areas. These areas, of course, require the supply officer to acquire not only extensive experience but also additional specialized training.

It must be noted at this point that the current procedure might need modification if there is to be improved efficiency. Today, more than ever, because of limited resources, advances in technology, and expansion of the Venezuelan Navy, the career development of the Venezuelan supply officer is of prime importance.

The purpose of this study, then, is to develop a rational career model of the Venezuelan supply officer, with primary emphasis on meeting both the changing needs of the Navy and the satisfaction of its members.

III. CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES: AN ANALYSIS

The purpose of this chapter is to indicate the current procedures or development practices in the Navy, giving emphasis to the problems they might cause for the Supply Corps, because of the lack of either a model or effective policies and procedures of career-development.

A. BACKGROUND

The Venezuelan Naval Supply Corps has adopted the U.S. Naval Supply Corps as applicable to the logistics system, with some modification due to the different environment.

Like the Venezuelan supply officer, his U.S. Navy counterpart does not have an officer career development manual or formal career patterns. Instead, the members of the U.S. Navy Supply Corps are kept appraised of career development activity through the Navy Supply Corps Newsletter. The Newsletter is a professional journal of the Naval Supply Corps, published monthly by the Supply Sustem Command of the Department of the Navy.

There are no explicit career development policies and goals to assure that supply officers will be provided the skills needed by the Venezuelan Navy.

The Venezuelan Navy plans for many diverse requirements and manages large numbers of officers. This planning and management result in a series of procedures oriented to the assignment of officers to the best advantage and interests

of the organization. So, in the Venezuelan Navy where the "service" is mission-oriented with lack of integration between the individual officer and the organization, compromises can not be weighed too heavily in favor of individual desires. A professional naval officer serves both the country and the Navy.

These procedures, unfortunately, have had opposite results. The supply officer who has succeeded in matching his own needs with thos of the Navy will be the officer most likely to feel job satisfaction. On the other hand, the officer who cannot match his individual needs to those of the Navy will feel frustration and, ultimately, a sense of failure.

There is no one absolute promotional path within the Venezuelan Navy. The officer who, over the years, best matches the interests and requirements for fulfilling naval assignments and amplifies those interests through experience and education is the officer most likely to enjoy progress in his naval career.

B. SUPPLY OFFICER PROCUREMENT

A Supply Corps officer is a naval officer, with normal military responsibilities, who must also perform management functions associated with the personnel, money, and materiel which maintain the Navy in a constant state of readiness which provides for the security of the country. Prior to the application required to become an officer in the Supply Corps, the applicant must first master the basic qualifications required for a commission as an ensign in the Venezuelan Navy.

There are two basic programs which lead from the civilian world to a commission in the Supply Corps, one being the Venezuelan Naval Academy and the other a graduate from a civilian institution (e.g., economists, accountants, and dietitians).

1. Venezuelan Naval Academy

The Venezuelan Naval Academy, located in Mamo, Distrito Federal, is the undergraduate college of the Navy. The Academy educates and trains selected young men for careers of leadership in the Naval Service. Graduates of the four-year course are awarded a Bachelor of Naval Science degree and a commission as an ensign in the Venezuelan Navy.

The great majority of midshipmen enter directly from high school. An appointment to the Academy includes full tuition, room and board, and a monthly salary for personal needs.

The curriculum at the Academy includes an opportunity to study in a wide variety of academic areas, as well as naval science, leadership training, and physical fitness. This curriculum is strengthened with practical experience in various fields of naval science, including at-sea experience, submarine and amphibious training. Upon commissioning, the ensign will assume a five-year active duty obligation [1, 173].

To fulfill its mission, the Naval Academy orients its curriculum totally to qualify midshipmen as surface warfare specialists. Only in the final semester at the Academy is Logistics taught. The purpose of this course is to familiarize

the midshipmen with the general concepts of logistics, but it does not train and qualify them to perform competently and efficiently in the supply specialty.

During the final semester at the Academy, the midshipmen have an opportunity to express the desire for any specialty. Normally, most of them choose surface warfare (engineering, weapons, and operations), and a very limited number apply for supply.

2. Officer Candidate Program

The Officer Candidate Program helps meet the Navy's continuing need for junior officers. Upon successful completion of three months of military and indoctrination training, candidates are commissioned as ensign, lieutenant j.g., or lieutenant specialists, depending on background. The candidate that has made his application with at least two years of university studies, but without the degree, is commissioned ensign. The candidate with a university degree is afforded the rank of lieutenant j.g., and the candidate with a university degree and at least five years of experience is afforded the rank of lieutenant. Upon commissioning, the officer specialists will assume a five-year duty obligation [1, 177].

C. NAVY SUPPLY CORPS

Since the beginning of the Venezuelan Navy, the Supply Corps has been assigned the task and responsibility of providing fuel, food, transportation, clothing and services in support of all Navy personnel.

However, despite the great importance and the complexity of the Logistics System, the junior supply officer has traditionally been assigned to a billet only with the education received in the theoretical "logistics course" taught since 1970 in the last term at the Naval Academy [2, 37].

The career of a Venezuelan supply officer normally spans 30 years. In the course of his naval career, a supply officer may be ordered to a great variety of duty assignments. It must be noted at this point that the Venezuelan Navy, to its best advantage and interests, projects orderly progressions of assignments for the Supply Corps without the participation of the individual supply officer.

Some of these assignments emphasize the over-all general supply function, while others require specialized technical skills and knowledge. Again, assignments may be essentially administrative or primarily operative, either in a large organization or as part of a small independent detachment.

Since training programs have not been instituted to develop the appropriate management skills required in this naval environment, the supply officer should be preparing himself for billets of increased responsibility via on-the-job training and job rotation. The junior supply officer's primary objective, quite naturally, is to prepare himself for a future assignment as a department head where he can apply knowledge and experience gained during earlier assignments.

D. INVENTORY CONTROL AND REQUIREMENTS

The size and structure of the Supply Corps depend on requirements for supply officer billets. The management of the Supply Corps officers is carried out by the Department of Officer Personnel which has the responsibility of meeting the number of billets requested by manpower authority in the organization. The management of supply officer inventory to provide an adequate supply posture for the Navy is a dynamic and challenging process. Normally, the number of officer assets is smaller than the number of billets (requirements). This occurs primarily because so few officers apply for supply, and because the dynamics of the system require fluctuations in inventory size caused by ever-changing billet requirements and manning priorities.

Accession quotas for the Supply Corps have not been met during the past several years. The quotas were approximately eight per year including line transfers.

E. OFFICER PROMOTIONS

The legal and administrative steps in officer promotions, beginning with the establishment of an officer's eligibility for consideration and ending when a promotion to the next higher grade actually is effected, may be described as a cycle. Within this cycle are three major elements: eligibility, selection, and promotion. Each is controlled by various laws, regulations, and administrative procedures.

Like any large operating organization, the structure of the Officer Corps of the Navy forms a pyramid which rises

from a broad base of junior officers, up through a relatively few flag officers. If there is to be realistic flow of promotion up this pyramid, all who enter at the bottom cannot reach the top. Each officer does, however, have the same promotion opportunity as his contemporaries.

F. CAREER PROGRESSION

The Supply Corps career progression, as it relates to the individual supply officer, is a rigid formal program under which the Navy projects orderly progressions of assignments for the Supply Corps to meet its needs. The specific factors involved in recruiting, training, and utilization of supply officer personnel at any given time are driven by the needs of the Navy for specific skills and experience. These needs are constantly changing as new technology is introduced and/or problems occur.

1. Basic Qualification

Since the early sixties, the Navy has maintained a policy of sending at least one junior officer (i.e., one officer with at least two years of service) to the U.S. Foreign Officer Supply Course (FOSCO). This course is taught at the U.S. Naval Supply Corps School, located in Athens, Georgia, and is designed to familiarize foreign officer personnel with the U.S. Navy supply system. It prepares these officers to control international logistics materiel and to further develop the supply system within their own navies. This course is very similar to the Basic Qualification Course (BQC) in Supply Management offered to the U.S. Supply Corps officer [15, 12].

In the early sixties, the Commandant of the Naval Squadron organized and created a Basic Logistics Course in order to give service training to the junior supply officers. It was designed as a service course of four weeks with the primary goal of familiarizing the supply officer with procedures and policies affecting their jobs, both afloat or ashore. However, the course has not been offered consistently.

In 1969 the Navy embarked on the Specialty Logistics Course. It was a course of 24 weeks, intended to qualify supply officers to perform effectively as supply specialists, applying existing policies and procedures affecting their jobs. The course was administered at the Naval Postgraduate School, located at the Venezuelan Naval Academy, Distrito Federal; after being in operation for only one year, the course was dis-established.

2. Postgraduate Education

The Venezuelan Navy postgraduate education policy is designed to provide Supply Corps officers with advanced education, thus responding to the Navy's increasing management needs at the higher levels of the organization, both today and in the future.

Since the early seventies, the Navy has been sending senior supply officers to different schools and universities inside and outside Venezuela.

G. SUMMARY

One of the conclusions drawn from the above analysis is that the supply officer does not have any participation in planning the progression of his career.

The Navy unilaterally projects the progression of the members of the corps in order to meet its present and future requirements. In general, this procedure does not do well for the individual.

Another conclusion is that the Navy does not have an educational program instituted to develop the appropriate management skills required by the members of the Supply Corps. Instead, the organization has been training its personnel with methods such as on-the-job training and job rotation.

There is no reason to believe that supply officers developed by these methods would be less effective or of lower value to the Navy. Although these by themselves do not seem to be enough, because too many erroneous things might be learned.

The success of these methods depends upon the quality of the job, the degree of learning expected, and the degree and quality of the coaching available.

There are no clear-cut career paths and career support systems by which the supply officer may proceed through specific steps to a definite goal. Instead, the Navy determines what should happen when, usually according to a given situation.

IV. ROLE OF THE VENEZUELAN SUPPLY OFFICER

A. CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUPPLY OFFICER

What is a supply officer? There is no recognized definition of a supply officer. Generally, it has been intimated as a logistician and a materiel or military manager.

Webster's Dictionary defines logistician as "a specialist in logistics." It defines logistics as "military science in its planning and handling and implementation of personnel and materiel and facilities and other related factors" [16, 1331].

The Logistics Review defines logistics as "the art and science of determining requirements, acquiring them, distributing them and finally, maintaining them in an operational ready condition for their entire life" [8, 3].

The Dictionary of the U.S. Military for Joint Usages defines materiel management as "that phase of military logistics which includes managing, cataloging, requirements determination, procurement, distribution, overhaul and disposal of materiel" [13, 96].

Military logistics, as defined by this dictionary, is that part of the entire military which deals with:

1. Design and development, acquisition, storage, movement, distribution, maintenance, and disposition of materiel.
2. Induction, classification, training, assignment, welfare, movement, and separation of personnel.

3. Acquisition or construction, maintenance, operation and disposition of facilities.

4. Acquisition or furnishing of services. It comprises both planning, including determination of requirements, and implementation [13, 96].

Terms like "logistics" or "supply" are either too broad or too narrow and are subject to misinterpretation. Logistics has evolved slowly and in a confusing manner in the business environment because it has been forced into a particular functional slot, such as materials supply or physical distribution. This restrictive view of the concept has stymied its growth and has hampered universal understanding. In reality, physical distribution or material management is but one facet of the logistics concept.

Logistics has long been used as a military term. The root of the word can be traced to the Latin loquqea, meaning "lodge" or "hut," and later to the French verb loger, which means "to lodge." The first recorded use of logistics in a military organization was the creation of the position of Marechal General des Logis by the French army in 1970. This officer was responsible for selecting campsites, planning marches, and regulating transportation and supply.

Through the years, as military strategy and equipment changed, so did the duties of logisticians. For instance, mammoth logistical problems were posed by global conflict during World War II, and post-war power struggles reaffirmed the constant need for highly mobile forces capable of immediate deployment to any location in the world. By solving the

problems associated with these complex needs, the modern concept of military logistics was formulated [2, 39-40].

Logistics encompasses supply, along with other steps in the business of designing, producing, distributing, and maintaining the people and things that make up the power of security. It cannot be denied that in some measure logistics is the business of every civilian and military person concerned with national security. Today more than ever, because of limitations on available resources and the unstable demand of technology, logistics is the personal concern of every military and civilian man having security responsibilities.

Several functions and management techniques are available with which a logistician or supply officer must be familiar and should have a thorough knowledge about if he is to accomplish his mission successfully. He must be able to:

1. Provide material when and where needed by use of his skills in the field of "distribution management." Distribution management is the combination of skills that has sometimes been referred to as inventory, transportation, and material management.

2. Program, budget, account and audit to assure the effective use of men, money and material in the field of "financial management."

3. Manage the interface between Navy and industrial management in the acquisition of weapons systems in the field of "project management."

4. Buy the Navy's weapons systems, material, and services in the field of "procurement management."

5. Provide the petroleum products and the related technical/engineering expertise needed to power the fleet in the field of "petroleum management."

6. Manage the Navy's exchange and commissary store systems in the field of "retail management."

7. Feed the Navy by providing expertise in the field of "food service management."

8. Provide general management expertise and often must be qualified in such fields as "computer management" or "operations research."

All of this complexity makes the position of the supply officer one of the most demanding in the modern Navy. He is virtually the sum of several functions of management which form the basis of the logistics system.

B. GENERAL ROLE

Whatever the job, a supply officer's assignment is one of the most demanding and rewarding positions that could be offered to a junior officer. The hours are long, the work hard, and the responsibilities great, but personal satisfaction is derived from successful performance in a challenging assignment.

In the broad sense, the general role should be to exercise responsibility, within the constraint of assigned authority, for the administrative, operational and technical aspects of his department. The functions for which he will be responsible encompass the vital shipboard requirements which contribute so much to the readiness of the ship and the morale of the crew. Effective exercise of these responsibilities requires a supply officer highly training to perform as both a naval officer and supply specialist. This requires in each supply officer a clear understanding of existing policies and procedures affecting his job, as well as possession of those attitudes and characteristics necessary to apply this knowledge.

On a ship, the supply officer reports directly to the executive officer (XO) and will take his place with the remaining three department heads who are usually more senior and have more operational experience.

Shore duty assignments are available to an extremely limited number of junior supply officers, since these are normally established only for senior supply officers. Shore duty jobs differ somewhat from assignments afloat, in that the primary mission is support to the fleet, managing the Food Service or Naval Supply Centers at any one of the Navy's shore installations.

C. ROLE AS A PROFESSIONAL MILITARY OFFICER

The supply officer is a professional military officer who should serve at sea early in his naval career. He performs this role in both surface ship and submarine and provides warfare skills with other specialties.

He is trained in surface warfare during his education at the Naval Academy. He receives an intensive education in operational tactics, weapons systems, and fundamentals of engineering. The curriculum structure of the Naval Academy is designed to equip the officer with the fundamental tools that will be needed for a first sea assignment.

The initial sea duty will usually be an assignment as a division officer within the Supply Department. In this assignment, besides his administrative responsibilities as a division officer, he needs to have knowledge of shipboard

communications, gunnery, main propulsion, damage control, operational tactics, or any one of several other duties below the department head level. The junior supply officer is expected to qualify as a Surface Warfare officer in this first tour, completing the fundamental qualifications which are required. He will qualify as Division Officer, Officer of the Deck in port, Combat Information Center Watch Officer, Surface Watch Officer, and other duties below the department head level.

Qualification as a Surface Warfare Officer is of significant concern in a junior supply officer, because this qualification will provide him with the basic skills of his naval profession.

D. ROLE AS A MANAGER SPECIALIST

There is no such thing as the right way for a manager to operate or behave. There are only ways that are appropriate for specific tasks of specific enterprises under specific temperaments and styles. There are some things all managers must do well and these may vary by the size and nature of the task.

The supply officer begins his career in the role of specialist. He must be able to perform all day-to-day administrative operations of his assigned duty.

In order to familiarize the supply officer with the administrative functions of his specialty, he is designated as head of a division within the Supply Department in his first tour. He will be responsible for the procurement of

stock, the maintenance of adequate stock levels, the utilization of effective merchandising techniques, sound financial management, the maintenance of required records, the submission of appropriate reports, and control and evaluation of personnel. The management of these service activities involves scheduling, constant evaluation of service, and prompt response to customer requirements.

Upon completion of his first tour, the supply officer will be oriented to the Navy and will recognize his own limitations and capabilities, thus obtaining a degree of self-confidence.

The managerial and leadership experience will prove invaluable to him in later assignments when he becomes a department head of a small noncombatant ship. An assignment as department head represents a tremendous challenge and offers the junior supply officer an opportunity to develop personal qualities and management skills.

He should have the following characteristics to successfully and effectively manage his department:

1. Administrative Ability

This basic factor includes the common functions of administration such as planning, controlling, organizing, directing, and evaluating.

Planning and control are perhaps the most basic and pervasive of all managerial functions. Planning is essentially an intellectual activity which involves setting goals and determining how they are to be achieved. It gives direction

and purpose to an organization's activities. Control, on the other hand, seeks to ensure that plans are being followed. Planning and control are inseparable elements in the management process. One is a prerequisite of the other.

Organizing involves creating and staffing the formal structure of work relationships in the organization. It is primarily concerned with establishing effective relationships between tasks and people.

Finally, in the process of performance evaluation, one of the most important considerations is the impact the process itself has on the personal attitudes and performance of the officer.

2. Supervisory

At this stage, the supply officer is acting as a manager trying to obtain as much productivity as possible from his subordinates. If he is a competent manager, he will create an environment within which these people perform willingly at a higher level than they naturally would.

This higher level of productivity will be the result of a combination of factors, including the direction the supply officer provides, the coordination of their personal objectives with the department's and the ship's objectives, and the control measures he takes to assure planned performance.

On the other hand, he may suffer from managerial ignorance. He just has no idea of what managing is. Why should he? Where did he learn how to manage?

The emerging consequence is that there can be no specific rules of supervision which can be expected to work well in all situations. Broad principles can be applied to the process of supervision and furnish valuable guides to behavior.

3. Leadership Roles

As head of a department, an officer assumes leadership of assigned subordinates, and within the ship he assumes leadership of the ship's crew.

As a leader, the manager's job is to provide for the simultaneous satisfaction of multiple and often conflicting goals and needs. Modern man is extremely complex; his abilities and motives vary considerably. The good leader is sensitive to this and is able to see and feel things from the points of view of others; he is aware of his own attitudes and assumptions and how they affect his behavior in dealing with people; and he has the personal flexibility to vary his behavior in appropriate ways.

The choice in managerial practice should not be between the supply officer who wants to overcentralize (i.e., the officer who cannot delegate properly and therefore demands a tight span of control so that he can pass on every subordinate decision, important or not) and the supply officer who is prepared to trust his subordinates and therefore wishes to see little of them. The first type is simply one who does not know how to "lead" and hence tries to "dominate." The latter type is one who does not realize that leadership calls for as much constant personal contact as circumstances permit.

Effective leadership is a function of a complex combination of factors, including aspects of the broader organization and its military environment, the traits and behavior of the leader's supervisor and subordinates, and the traits and behavior of the leader himself.

4. Team Member

His attention and emphasis, however, are not limited to the military profession, specialization, supervision and leadership. He has the additional duties of a team member, an officer's helper, a representative, a strategist, and a public relations man.

There are three more department heads at the same organizational level. They report to the same superior, and with him they form a team. Each department head tries to operate in such a way that he serves the interests, not only of his own department, but of the other departments in order to meet the total objective of the organization.

E. SUMMARY

Even under the best of conditions there is a need for some type of training-and-development activities required for personnel in the organization. For one thing, there is an on-going need to provide specific job training, particularly for new supply officers. There is also a need to provide development that will contribute both to the long-run effectiveness of the officers involved and to the organization itself.

Obviously, then, different methods of training and development are appropriate to different situations.

This author, who has been a supply officer for eleven years, believes that in order to be effective in this demanding environment, an understanding of the functions of management and the requirements of the logistics system are required before the first tour is ordered. There is a need to provide the new supply officer with specific training in accordance with his broad responsibilities.

V. THE PROPOSED MODEL FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The preceding chapters have presented the existing professional development practices in the Venezuelan Navy. In this chapter, as a final task of this study, the intent is to propose a model for the career development of the Venezuelan Navy based on the foregoing discussions.

Any organization is dependent upon the skills and motivation of its people. The Navy is a complicated, swiftly evolving organization using advanced state-of-the-art hardware and systems in a unique environment. It therefore requires special skills and talents in its people which must be developed in-house. Career development is the process by which the Navy would develop the skills and talents needed by Supply Corps officers to serve the Navy.

> "If development is to be successful, it must be geared not only to the participant's needs and learning abilities, but also to the particular requirements and practices of the organization in which he manages...." [3, 11].

It is not claimed that the proposed model can fill the void existing in the system. But it can be considered as an opening to a more effective and efficient career development for the Navy.

A. CAREER DEVELOPMENT

A career is a progression of billet assignments. The assignments levy a continual increase in the level of responsibility along the progression. Each assignment is meant to

utilize past experience, training, and education. In addition, each new billet develops and expands the experience base for future assignments. Since the goal will be to develop the supply officer to the highest potential, there are no specific end points in development.

The career development plan will place assignments in a progression of responsibilities and shall establish milestones for each assignment.

Every effort should be made to make the Supply Corps a fulfilling and rewarding career. This is not just a discretionary requirement, but an absolute necessity. If Officers are not satisfied they cannot be retained. If they are not motivated for their assignment or do not possess the requisite interests and skills for them, they will not do a quality job. If their careers have been haphazardly managed, based on the demands of the moment, they cannot build the expertise needed for the future.

Meeting the needs and desires of each individual is therefore vital. It also highlights the importance of the individual officer's traditional dedication and willingness to put the needs of the Navy and nation above his personal desires when called upon to do so.

For personnel managers (Department of Officers Personnel), a career development plan will provide a measurement scale against which to compare the total population of officers in the organization. Management can assess how well the over-all goals of the development plan are being met and can adjust the

plan to meet changing requirements. Thus, while for the individual the career development plan provides a microscopic view, for management it provides a macroscopic view.

To respond to these requirements, the Navy should continually retrain officers already in the inventory. This is an ever-recurring adjustment; therefore, a career development plan should always be designed as a flexible pattern of potential assignments. Tour lengths, billets, training and timing of assignments all become variables in this dynamic process.

B. THE MODEL

The following model is not intended to represent a definitive career development process. Rather, the purpose is to describe, on the basis of factors derived in the previous chapters of the study, the components of career development and to indicate or recommend the events that the Navy should follow during the process.

1. The Components of Career Development

The skills and talents needed by a supply officer can be provided to him through job rotation (experience), training, and education.

The education, training, and experience gained by an officer contributes to his qualification for a given billet or billets.

While career-development programs aim to develop high quality officers who possess the skills and expertise needed

needed by the Navy, only the education and training components of the program will be oriented to providing skills for future use. Operational and administrative assignments usually will serve a double purpose. They put the expertise the officer brings to or develops in the job to productive use while concurrently developing expertise useful in future billets.

a. Training

The development of an effective and competent supply officer is essential to the achievement of satisfactory operational and administrative requirements of the Navy.

It is difficult to acquire that knowledge without the benefit of specialized, formal training. This is not the only training that is necessary, but it is an invaluable starting point. It will lay the foundation that shall be broadened and expanded with the knowledge gained from on-the-job training and job rotation.

To be effective, any formal training program must be responsive to the level of needs of the trainee as well as the needs of the job.

The task of keeping officers educated and trained in sufficient breadth and depth to meet the existing demands of the day is a formidable one.

A brief analysis of the Supply Corps gives an immediate insight into the existing procedure. The most alarming statistic is that a disproportionate percentage of supply officers has not received any kind of specialized, formal training. The newly commissioned supply officer comes afloat without any formal training.

The relevant reason for this tendency is that training programs have not been instituted to develop the appropriate managerial skills of supply officers.

In order to develop such skills, the first recommendation to the Navy would be the necessity of building a team of experts (qualified supply officers and civilians) who could develop an occupational task analysis to be used in analyzing supply officer occupations. The purpose is to provide occupational data needed to improve the utilization, training, and assignment of personnel.

Before the application of this task analysis questionnaire, it should be validated. It can be done by selecting at random a few afloat units to which the questionnaire should be administered. Once validated, it should be administered to the Supply Corps officers.

The questionnaire shall represent the first operational application of an officer occupational analysis developed under research by the Venezuelan Navy. It shall be a comprehensive compilation of the tasks in which supply officers are involved. As such, it shall be inclusive of all ship types and ashore naval installations.

The information drawn from this questionnaire shall tell the team what requisite training can be provided by the Navy Supply School to develop a Supply Corps officer who shall indeed be prepared for the challenging role of managing a supply department within the Venezuelan Navy.

The content of the programs shall be determined by the team, once the questionnaires have been evaluated and analyzed.

The emphasis should be upon the primary responsibilities necessary to maintain combat readiness. The content should include:

1. Fundamentals of procurement,
2. Inventory control,
3. Budgeting of funds,
4. Food service,
5. Retail operations,
6. Payment,
7. Quantitative management techniques, and
8. Human behavior.

All of this means that the training must be realistic, dynamic, and overt in pursuing the needs the Supply Corps officers require.

Also, the team's mission shall include the selection of an installation to implement a Supply School to carry out the training programs.

There are two educational centers where the Navy may implement a Supply School to meet these requirements. The Naval Postgraduate School and Naval Training Center are both institutions with the human and financial resources to manage a Supply School.

Upon completion of the training programs, the officer shall be qualified to perform in the supply billets.

b. Education

An integral part of the over-all career development program for supply officers is the opportunity for

advanced education in all the business management areas for which the Supply Corps is responsible.

Education is typically broad and general. It may be required to qualify for particular billets but is of even greater value throughout and beyond a naval career.

The goal of the Navy educational programs should be to meet billet requirements and to provide some postgraduate education for all qualified active duty senior supply officers.

The programs should be designed to capitalize upon the individual officer's abilities and potential by extending his studies to include specialized areas, and to offer eligible officers postgraduate education at the master's level in both technical and nontechnical fields of study.

Graduate education imparts advanced technical knowledge, but more importantly, it helps to broaden one's capacity for original thought and provides an increased inventory of intellectual tools, particularly in quantitative techniques and methods which are so necessary in Supply Corps functions as the officer's assignments become more responsible.

A supply officer with an advanced degree acquires a greatly expanded order of decision-making capability based on analytical approaches to problems.

Fresh ideas and greater insight into advancing technology is brought to the Supply Corps by an officer who has the opportunity to leave the operating environment and to interact with other professionals in an academic environment.

Navy-sponsored postgraduate curricula are presently available at several national and foreign institutions.

Course titles, participating universities, course length are contained in Figures 1 and 2.

COURSE TITLE	PARTICIPATING SCHOOL	LENGTH
Public Administration	ENAP, Caracas	20 mo.
Management	IESA, Caracas	18 mo.
Management Science	USB, Caracas	20 mo.

Figure 1 - National Institutions

COURSE TITLE	PARTICIPATING SCHOOL	LENGTH
Administrative Sciences (Financial, Personnel, and Material)	Naval Postgraduate School, USA	18. mo.
Financial Management	George Washington University, USA	12 mo.
Transportation Management	Michigan State University, USA	12 mo.
Graduate Logistics	Air Force Institute of Technology, USA	12 mo.

Figure 2 - Foreign Institutions

Selection for postgraduate education must be based on demonstrated professional performance as indicated in fitness reports, but the Chief of Naval Personnel should also screen an applicant academically to ensure that the minimum entrance requirements for the various educational institutions can be met. The opportunity for each officer is better served if, prior to application, he honestly evaluates his qualifications for the preferences being evaluated.

A major objective of career development should be to provide necessary specialized knowledge while not compromising the vital over-all system perspective and sea experience that the naval officer must provide.

The Supply Corps officers must also have the opportunity to follow professional military education at the Naval War School. The Naval War School's mission is to take an operationally effective naval officer (LCDR/CDR rank), and prepare him for a broader leadership role. In addition, it supplies officers of executive potential with educational experiences uniquely applicable to the military's role in society.

c. Experience

From a career-development viewpoint, a billet is not only a job which must be accomplished, but also an opportunity for an officer to gain certain experience valuable for his future career pattern.

Each billet should also provide maturity, and leadership and management experience.

The expertise gained by one officer at a particular point in the flow may be gained by another officer at a different point and in a different billet.

It should be noted, however, that the billet base existing and available to an officer at any point in time will not always permit the perfect assignment to best use expertise developed in the past, or to qualify an officer for specific future billets.

C. JOB MATCHING

Every effort should be made to match the officer to the most challenging job available in his functional area, consistent with the needs of the Navy. If these elements can be combined each time an officer is reassigned, it is a mutually satisfying assignment for both the officer and the Navy, and a stepping stone in the officer's career progression.

D. GENERAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

In the assignment of officer personnel, the Navy is influenced by needs of the service, current composition of the Supply Corps officers, and the professional development of each officer.

Service need is simply the day-to-day requirement of Navy activities for specific grades with certain talents. Professional development has a dual nature. In ordering officers to varied types of duties and schools, the Navy is not only fulfilling its own mission of preparing these officers for future command responsibilities, but also is performing a

genuine service for the individual by expanding his experience and thus increasing promotional prospects.

With few exceptions, orders involving permanent change of station for supply officers shall be originated by the Chief of Naval Personnel, who sets the basic policy pertaining to officer rotation. This policy shall concern varying the types of duty assignments, inasmuch as this is the basic requirement in developing an officer's capabilities and providing him with a full career. Deviation from basic policy shall be provided as necessary to meet problems that arise.

In addition to the requirements for rotation, assignment patterns reflect the need for educational opportunities for over-all career value or for utilization in a particular billet, for progression of responsibility, and for utilization of specialized training.

Officers should realize that they have the primary responsibility for their own individual career planning.

1. Initial Training

Officers who enter the supply specialty must be sent to a course of intensive training at the Supply School. To prepare the newly commissioned supply officer for on-the-job training experience, or to supplement it, a number of relatively short functional training courses should be available.

The systems by which naval activities are supplied are diverse and complex. They are designed to meet problems and to operate in environments unique to the Navy. Although the governing principles upon which these systems are based

are common to many organizations, the detailed policies, procedures and practices used by the Navy supply manager are necessarily unique. This fact, coupled with the vital importance of common understanding and use of procedures and practices in efficiently operating large widespread systems, make detailed training necessary prior to assignment of an officer to his first operational supply billet.

The primary goal of this basic supply course must be to qualify each officer to perform effectively as a supply specialist.

The functional segments of the course shall correspont to the major technical areas in which the new supply officer may be required to operate. These courses are discussed in the following paragraphs.

a. Inventory Course

The primary objective of the afloat supply officer is to provide effective and responsive supply support necessary to sustain the various weapons, propulsion, sensor and auxiliary systems aboard ship.

Essential to becoming an efficient supply officer is a comprehensive understanding of how the Navy operates. By becoming familiar with basic inventory and financial management concepts and learning the supply vocabulary, the supply officer shall be able to use the supply system to provide his ship effective and timely supply support. He should become familiar with a number of files, records, documents, publications and other management tools used in maintaining the balance between his inventory and financial resources.

Organization, material identification, procurement and expenditure must be taught in connection with accounting procedures relevant to the various transactions.

b. Disbursing Course

The primary goal of this course should be to qualify each officer to perform effectively as a disbursing manager. The course should include the study of military pay entitlements and procedures, cashbook maintenance, procurement and disposition of funds, payment of dealers' bills, and financial returns.

c. Leadership and Management Course

The objective of the Leadership and Management Course should be to assist the officer in becoming the effective leader/manager essential to an afloat supply department or division.

Leadership and management should be primarily directed toward aiding the officer in the development of the human and conceptual skills necessary for competent management. He should be able to tackle administrative and personnel matters as well as act as a consultant to his men in matters of individual development, performance, training, and personal problems. Consequently, the course should include studies in career counseling, financial counseling, training, performance, evaluation and any related topics.

d. Retail Course

The supply officer afloat manages one or more retail outlets called ship's stores, as well as various

service activities, including a laundry and barber shop. The ship's store provides several hundred necessities for sale, and the service activities provide the necessary personal services on a regular basis to crew members. The supply officer finds a great challenge in determining and procuring required material, maintaining the physical security of stock and money, operating the service activities accurately, and maintaining accurate records and submitting appropriate reports.

To prepare the officer for this challenge, the Retail Course should explore such areas as material procurement, pricing, merchandising, service activity operation, vending machines, inventory controls, record keeping, and preparation of reports and returns.

e. Food Service Course

The supply officer afloat has the responsibility for feeding the crew. In addition, he must be able to operate the mess for extended periods of time without replenishing, to avoid impairing the ship's operation. These considerations, taken together, demand a knowledge of menu planning, food preparation, procuring and endurance loading provisions.

The supply officer needs a great amount of technical knowledge before he can effectively manage and audit the operation. Consequently, the course shall familiarize the officer with the operation of the mess, the equipment used, the basics of menu planning, methods of determining and procuring provision requirements, and various other topics

pertinent to an efficient operation. He shall gain a detailed knowledge of keeping general mess records and learn the procedures for submitting financial reports and returns.

f. Quantitative Management Course

This course shall be oriented toward preparing the officer in quantitative management techniques, acquainting the supply officer with the decision-making methods, including probability, sampling, decision logic tables, queing, PERT, GANTT, and the scientific approach to problem-solving.

Upon completion of the courses, the supply officer should be equipped with the fundamental tools that he will need for a successful first sea assignment.

The length of the courses shall be determined by the team of specialists designated by the Navy.

2. Initial Sea Tours

Successful completion of the functional training signifies that the officer has attained the necessary skills to be ordered to his initial sea tour. He shall be assigned to sea duty for a four to five-year period.

The initial sea tour is split into three shorter tours, one as a division officer of a large combatant or noncombatant ship, assistant to the supply officer, within the Supply Department, and the second and third as Supply Department Head on a small combatant or noncombatant ship.

The following considerations have been taken into account in ordering a new supply officer to an initial sea tour.

1. The organizational requirement that no supply officer in the grade of LCDR and above will be given an afloat assignment,

2. To give to the new supply officer opportunity to learn the operational requirements of the naval profession at sea early in his naval career.

3. To assign supply officers to billets afloat which are required by the organization from ensign to LCDR.

Upon completion of the functional training, the new supply officer will report to his first ship for a one-and-a-half to two-year tour of duty.

The initial sea duty assignment will be either as a division officer or assistant to the supply officer within the Supply Department, in charge of a particular supply function such as supply operations, disbursing or ship's general mess.

In this tour the new officer is expected to qualify both as a Supply Officer and as a Surface Warfare Officer. In this period he will receive a great deal of advanced instruction that expands upon the basic skills obtained during the functional training. This single ship tour shall provide him with the time needed to learn and improve the basic skills of his profession.

He will be prepared to qualify as a CIC or Surface Watch Officer, to learn the ship's engineering capabilities and limitations, to discover how the ship is a total weapons system, to support the Navy mission, and to participate in the various evolutions which are integral to the operational environment.

Besides the operational responsibilities, he shall be responsible for the procurement of stock, maintenance of adequate stock levels and related administrative functions of his division.

The maximum time allowed for this qualification shall be 24 months, since it usually takes one or two years for an officer to obtain a thorough working knowledge of the functions and responsibilities of his duty. This time allowance is subject to change by the Chief of Naval Personnel because of the constraint on the limitation of officers allowed on each tour.

The importance of this initial sea tour cannot be overemphasized, for it is during this period that the new supply officer is closely evaluated by the commanding officer, whose recommendation is vital for future assignments.

Upon completion of the initial sea tour, the supply officer will be ordered to a small combatant or noncombatant ship as Head of Department.

It is at this point in his career that the supply officer will appreciate the effort he expended during his first tour. As a department head, his responsibilities are far broader than they were at the division level. In addition to what normally is a heavy daily work load, he ought now to be considering how he will proceed to positions of still greater responsibility. He has the time now to prepare himself.

In this tour he is expected to qualify as a Head of Department, and learn and improve the basic skills of his naval profession. Normally, the maximum time allowed for this qualification on board a small combatant or noncombatant ship is 12 months. Although, again, it will depend on approval by the Chief of Naval Personnel with the limitation of officers considered.

Following this tour, the supply officer will be a assigned to another small combatant or noncombatant ship, where he will continue progressing through his assignments. This billet will offer him challenge and responsibility at sea, and will be one which can best build on his past professional experience and demonstrated capabilities.

Once he has completed the initial sea tours, he will become available for assignment to a shore duty billet or for selection to the Junior Functional Training.

3. First Shore Tour

Shore duty assignments are available to an extremely limited number of junior supply officers. Shore duty jobs differ somewhat from assignments afloat in that the primary reason is support to the fleet. They are located in every area where the Navy has stations and facilities.

Due to the lack of shore duty, few supply officers will be assigned to fill those billets. Others will attend postgraduate school as required.

Naval supply officer education will take two forms. First, functional schools which prepare him for specific

assignments; and second, more formal disciplines, which improve his own mental coordination. Both types of schools are important to him and the Navy because of the opportunities they offer in broadening professional knowledge.

The supply officer may expect to be ordered ashore for a tour of approximately two years.

4. Second Sea Tours

Upon completion of his first shore assignment, ordinarily after six-and-a-half to seven years of commissioned service, he will be assigned again to sea duty for a four-year period.

This sea duty is split into two shorter tours, primarily aboard large combatant and noncombatant ships. The shipboard billets he fills during his second sea tour will be as Head of the Supply Department.

As a department head, a supply officer will have broader responsibilities than those on a small combatant or noncombatant ship. This tour will be particularly important in his professional naval development. It encompasses great individual responsibility and is a meaningful test of his professional officer potential. In comparison to his past billets, the department head is not a trainee or novice; rather, he is the "expert" in his area of responsibility.

5. Second and Subsequent Shore Tours

The second shore tour will commence near the thirteenth year of commissioned service, and again will be about two years in length. This will be the second, and most likely,

opportunity to obtain Navy-sponsored postgraduate education. If he acquired postgraduate education during his first shore tour, this tour will probably be a "utilization tour" combining a specific functional area with department-head-level technical and management experience gained at sea.

This tour will be his first opportunity to serve in the wide variety of billets associated with the logistics system.

The officer will again have an opportunity for postgraduate education, with pay-back requirements which are identical to those of the first shore tour.

During the second and subsequent shore tours he will be assigned to billets of steadily increasing challenge and responsibility. These billets normally fall into three categories, either in his sub-specialty, at a senior service college, or at a major shore command.

a. Billets in the Area of His Sub-specialty

By this point in his career he should have developed a sub-specialty either by means of postgraduate education or by repetitive tours in a particular sub-specialty area. The sub-specialty assignment area is receiving increased emphasis throughout the Navy because it stresses the idea of building a strong professional outlook on a logical progression of related assignments. As an officer progresses along the promotion path, it will become readily apparent that more of his career will be devoted to shore duty assignments.

b. Senior Service College Assignment

A senior service college tour at the Naval War School is another outstanding opportunity available to selected senior lieutenant commanders and commanders.

c. Other Ashore Duties

The Headquarters and Commands ashore remain the Naval focal points and, as such, many challenging billets are available. There are few junior officer billets in the Headquarters and Commands; however, commencing with the grade of lieutenant commander, there are a great number of significant shore opportunities.

A headquarters or command tour is unquestionably an important step in the professional progression to captain and flag rank. It is, therefore, wise to seek a headquarters or command tour at the earliest opportunity in one's career.

E. SUMMARY

The concept of Supply Corps Career Development can be likened to the generalized supply corps career pattern shown in Figure 3.

The basic skills needed by the supply officer are initially introduced at Naval Supply School. These are in the areas of system inventory, physical material, material movement or transportation, operational experience, merchandising, food service, procurement and financial management.

These types of expertise shall be blended in various individual ways as the officer progresses through his career and gains both professional growth and specialization.

GRADE	YEARS	PERIOD	SEA	ASHORE
ENSIGN	1	BASIC DEVELOPMENT		Navy Supply School
	2		Assistant Supply Officer, large combatant or non-combatant ship	
	3		Supply Officer, small combatant or noncombatant ship	
LT. J. G.	4		Supply Officer, medium or small noncombatant ship	
	5			
	6			General Supply, Specific Functional Area, or Functional Training (if required)
	7			
LIEUTENANT	8		Supply Officer, large combatant or noncombatant ship	
	9			
	10		Supply Officer, large combatant or noncombatant ship	
	11			
LIEUTENANT COMMANDER	12	FUNCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT		General Supply, Specific Functional Area, or Postgraduate Education
	13			Department Head of Naval Supply Center, Headquarters or Bases and Commands
	14			
	15			
COMMANDER	16			Department Head of Naval Supply Center, Headquarters or Bases and Commands
	17			
	18			Naval War School or Postgraduate Education (if required) Department Head, Naval Supply Center
	19			
CAPTAIN	20	COMMAND AND MANAGEMENT		Commanding Officer, Naval Supply Center, Broad Management in Functional Area or General Supply
	21			
	22			
	23			
	24			
	25			
	26			
	27			
	28			
	29			
	30			

Figure 3 - General Supply Corps Rotation Pattern

The ensign through lieutenant level, or first eleven years, can be characterized as a time for gaining basic knowledge, experience and specialization needed in future billets. Here he should obtain his basic operational (sea) experience, as well as training or experience in a number of proficiency areas.

The lieutenant commander/commander level, through year nineteen, is a management entry level where the officer both deepens and broadens his skill base and develops the potential needed at more senior levels.

The captain and flag levels can be characterized as upper and top management levels where the officer applies his potential while continuing to develop his expertise in a series of successively broader management assignments.

The performance, experience, and progression of qualifications at every grade level will determine an officer's potential and opportunity for future assignments. A career in the Supply Corps is competitive, and qualifications for billets of increasing responsibility are cumulative as officers proceed through various sea and shore assignments.

The foregoing study was designed to provide the supply officer with a broad overview of career policies and opportunities. It is presented as part of the over-all plan to create the development of the career of the Venezuelan supply officer.

This study has attempted to trace the role played in supply officer career development by three factors: education,

functional training, and development. In analyzing the procedure in use by the Navy, several opportunities for improved development have been identified. In addition, a suggested model of general development planning has been proposed.

This study could not possibly include all variables which must be considered when planning a supply career. Careers are as different as the officers who serve in them.

The one universal factor influencing a successful career is that of individual performance. Officers should bear in mind that the better one's performance as a supply officer, the greater the number of career options.

Nevertheless, some of the ideas in this thesis, if implemented by the Venezuelan Navy, could help to improve the performance of supply officers. When the needs and desires of the individual are matched to the needs and opportunities of the organization, a truly productive enterprise will prevail. The career path is the obvious place for both the individual and the organization to work cooperatively for effectiveness and improvement.

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